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TOWARDS SOCIAL DEMOC-
RACY? A STUDY OF SOCIAL
EVOLUTION DURING THE
PAST THREE-QUARTERS OF A
CENTURY. BY SIDNEY WEBB.

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PREFACE.

THE sketch here reproduced, of the course of development of social organisation during the past three-quarters of a century, was written seven years ago.* It is impossible to read it to-day without asking in what way the persistent "stream of tendencies" that we detect between 1840 and 1914 is likely to be affected by the Great World War.

One thing seems plain. In so far as the changes of the last three-quarters of a century represent a development from an economic and political Individualism to an increasingly Collectivist organization of society, the movement will certainly go on from one end of the world to the other, probably with continuous acceleration. To speak only of this country, the war has brought us appreciably nearer to the Nationalisation of the Railways, Canals, and Coal supply, if not also of merchant shipping. Agriculture will not escape some local and experimental national intervention, for discharged soldiers and otherwise. The Government will inevitably be driven to reclaim for collective administration a quite unexpectedly large proportion of the tribute incomes of rent and interest that the landlords and capitalists fondly thought to be their own. The public control of mobile capital (which will certainly not again be quite free to flow whither it pleases), and of such requisites of increased national production as indispensable minerals, the plant and organisation of "key industries" and "essential trades," is evidently destined to be greatly increased. Finally, although the Government will long feel poor, the conviction that the nation must augment its virility will lead to a steady development of the Collective Provision for maternity, infancy, and the physical as well as the mental training of youth, if only to ensure that as small a proportion of the population as possible shall be found to be non-effective

* It was prepared in 1909 for *The Cambridge Modern History*, and it appeared in the twelfth volume of that work. The author is indebted to the Syndics of the University Press, Cambridge, for permission to republish it in separate form. An appendix supplies a few notes as to books in which further information can be obtained, and describes the progress made on particular points since 1909.

in the hour of national strain. From this point of view, both the prevention of accidents and disease, and the adequate treatment of sickness, plainly impossible to the individual, will acquire a new importance. In short, merely as a means of national security, the coming generation is going to see a rapid increase in Collective Ownership and Administration, in Collective Regulation, in Collective Taxation, and in Collective Provision. But this was defined, a quarter of a century ago, as the "Fourfold Path" of Socialism itself!

We have, however, to ask by whom the rapidly growing collectivist organisation will be controlled, to what ends its work will be directed, and for whose benefit it will be made to operate. Shall we, in this or any other country, be able to secure such progressive improvements in the machinery of popular control, and in the capacity of the citizens for collective action, as to ensure (i) that the giving of ultimate decisions on fundamental issues of national policy shall be effectively in the hands of the whole people; (ii) that the whole people shall have an intelligent "consciousness of consent" to current administration; and (iii) that the action of the Government shall be consistently directed towards an equal wellbeing of the whole people, and not merely towards the power and the riches of selected classes? What, in fact, is likely to happen, under the strain of war pressure, to the evolution that has been going on in Democracy itself?

We cannot overlook the adverse effects of the "militarism" to which war, and the fear of war, is driving all nations. To take our own country only, it was doubtless inevitable that, in the stress of unparalleled national danger, our most cherished constitutional safeguards should have been abandoned, that minorities should have been suppressed, and that individuals should have been unjustly trampled on. In war, it is imperative the energies of all the people should be, as far as is practicable, concentrated upon a single end and directed by one will. This, because it is incompatible with individual development, social equality, or a sense of personal freedom, is one of the evils of war. But just because war is by its very nature a transient and not a perpetual condition, such temporary military servitude can be willingly accepted by Democrats. There is, indeed, no danger that the Defence of the Realm Acts, the Munitions of War Acts, and the Military Service Act—any more than the thousand and one unauthorised acts of the Executive Government since August, 1914—will continue beyond the war itself. Unfortunately some of their influences will remain. It would be foolish to ignore the rise in some sections of "the governing class", notably among the engineering employers and other "captains of industry", and among some politicians of the Junker type, of a determination "to have done with" such growing demo-

cratic encroachments on their personal power over their fellow-citizens, and on their riches, as have been manifesting themselves in Trade Unionism, Minimum Wage Acts, and the progressive graduation of the Income Tax and Death Duties.

To counteract the "militarist" influences that will certainly be at work, and to secure that the rapidly developing Collectivist State shall be, at the same time, a really Democratic State, we need an equally rapid development in Democracy itself. We see now that Habeas Corpus and Vote by Ballot—even the election of a Labour Party to the House of Commons—do not, in themselves, ensure democratic control. It is not merely that Democracy, to be effective, involves a more highly educated and a more politically minded population than we yet possess. It is not merely that we need to create a larger supply of men trained to what is, in reality, the highly specialised functions of elected representatives on the one hand, and of administrative officials on the other; and to learn to keep these two classes to their several duties. What has to be developed in the United Kingdom is much more, on the one hand, of popular Democracy in Local Government, to which the mass of all classes still refuse to give sufficient attention; and on the other, of that "Industrial Democracy" of the factory, the farm, the railway and the mine, to which, whether in Trade Unions, Workshop Committees, or Joint Boards, more and more participation in management will have to be conceded.

What is vital to any real Democracy in a densely-peopled, economically-complicated modern State, is that the Government should not be one. The very concentration of authority which is essential in war is, in peace, fatally destructive not of freedom alone, but also of that maximum individual development which is the very end and purpose for which society exists. We need to resist the concentration and centralisation to which "militarism" is prone. We ought to multiply and diversify our educational institutions, and put them, from Workers' Education Association tutorial classes up to Summer Schools and Universities, under as many (and as many kinds of) independent governing bodies as we can invent. We need to maintain and to develop the autonomy, and as far as possible to increase the scope, of our County and Municipal and other Local Government authorities, using the "Grant in Aid" as preferable to the direct administration of a centralised bureaucracy. The Co-operative Movement affords a valuable opportunity for bringing more and more of the manufacture and distribution of household supplies under a democratic control which is independent of the political government, whether central or local. And, seeing that our daily work touches our lives even more continuously and more closely than most of those that we have hitherto known as

political issues, it is imperative that we should bring to bear on the conditions of work in the farm and the factory, the railway and the mine—probably by some development of the vocational organisation of which the existing Trade Unionism of crafts and professions supplies the nucleus—both that “criticism from below” and that democratic control to which, in the coming century, industry as well as political government will have increasingly to adjust itself. Nothing, in fact, is more urgently needed to-day in the public administration of this country than the development of an independent, outspoken, and expert criticism, as regards departmental *technique* and machinery, of the bureaucracy *from within*—a function to be performed only by Vocational Organisation, of which not the Trade Unions alone, but also the General Medical Council, the various Engineering Standards Committees, and the present incipient Teachers’ Registration Council offer models and types.

The issue between the classes and the masses may be upon us sooner than we imagine. The first menace to Democracy in the United Kingdom may not come in the form of an attempt to utilise the war for political reaction. We may find ourselves, on the very Outbreak of Peace, plunged into industrial strife. The cessation of the present Government expenditure of four or five million pounds a day, the scramble for productive employment of six or seven millions of discharged soldiers and munition workers, the determination of the employers in certain great industries to revert to the autocratic management of “their own” concerns, the probable slump in wages and widespread unemployment, the continuance of prices at a high level, and a general raising of working-class rents owing to our neglect to make good the long-continued shortage of cottages—all these features of the first few months after peace will, unless provided against by far-reaching measures of industrial reconstruction, of which there is at present no sign, lead to a whole series of industrial conflicts in which Labour will fight under grave disadvantages. At the same time the cost of the war will have to be met, and rather than face an Income Tax of ten shillings in the pound, and a Supertax rising to half as much again, a determined attempt may be made by Customs Duties on the necessaries of life, and even by a poll-tax on wages, to throw the bulk of the cost on the shoulders of the millions of consumers. To this the Co-operative and Trade Union Movements—it is to be hoped also the political Labour movement—will offer a strenuous resistance. In the midst of such social and industrial conflicts there may seem but little chance of an evolution of Political Democracy that will keep pace with the rapidly growing Collectivism. Yet such an evolution is imperatively required.

If it is asked what, amid all these distracting pressures, is likely, during the coming century, to happen to the Freedom of the Individual, the answer must be that it depends essentially on this very Evolution of Democracy. Collectivism we are certain to have. In the complex social and industrial organisation of a densely-peopled great state, mere reliance on the Parliamentary Vote and the Payment of Members no more guarantees Freedom than Patent Medicines ensure Health. Down to 1914, Democracy had been evolving into Social Democracy at a rate fast enough actually to increase Individual Freedom. If by Personal Liberty we mean the practical opportunity that we have of exercising our faculties and fulfilling our desires—and nothing else is worth the name of Freedom—the seventy-five years between 1840 and 1914 witnessed an aggregate increase in popular liberty probably unparalleled in any previous century. In the United Kingdom, even the humblest person became, in that period, a little more “free”, whilst the great majority of the population obtained vastly greater opportunities of exercising their faculties and fulfilling their desires than their grandfathers enjoyed. And this increase of personal freedom has been, it is now clear, the direct result of the establishment of the Common Rules and the enforcement of the National Minimum which have especially characterised the past three-quarters of a century—the great development of Local Government and of the Co-operative Movement, the upgrowth of Factory Legislation and of Trade Unionism, the legal protection of the individual even within the family, the provision, still far from adequate, made for every kind of non-effective from the infant to the senile. It is to a continued extension of this beneficent Collectivism under Democratic control that we have still to look for a further increase of Freedom. The attack with which Democracy is unfortunately now threatened is inspired—the fact is in some quarters not concealed—by a wish to put a stop to, and as far as possible to reverse, the growth of liberty that has in this way been secured for the lives of the common people, in order that the riches and the domination of the landlords and capitalists may not be further impaired. We shall be the better prepared to deal with this attack if we realise how, as described in the following essay, the organisation of society has been, in fact, changing during the past two or three generations.

SIDNEY WEBB.

41 GROSVENOR ROAD,
WESTMINSTER.
April, 1916.

TOWARDS SOCIAL DEMOCRACY?

A STUDY OF SOCIAL EVOLUTION DURING THE LAST THREE-QUARTERS OF A CENTURY.

THE condition of the people in 1842, as seen in the streets of Bolton in Lancashire, was described by Colonel Perronet Thompson (1783-1869) in language that palpitates with anger. "Anything like the squalid misery, the slow, mouldering, putrefying death by which the weak and feeble of the working classes are perishing here, it never befel my eyes to behold nor my imagination to conceive. And the creatures seem to have no idea of resisting or even repining. They sit down with oriental submission, as if it was God and not the landlord that was laying his hand upon them." At the same time the new Boards of Guardians throughout the whole country were employing between forty and fifty thousand adult able-bodied men in oakum-picking, stone-breaking, and bone-crushing, in the "labour yards" attached to the hated "Bastilles of the poor," on pittances of poor relief just sufficient to keep them and their families alive. Of such workers as were fortunate enough to be still in wage-earning employment, men, women, and children, "pent up in a close dusty atmosphere from half-past five or six o'clock in the morning till seven or eight o'clock at night, from week to week, without change, without intermission, it is not to be wondered at," states a contemporary government Report, "that they fly to the spirit and beer-shops and the dancing-house on the Saturday nights to seek those, to them, pleasures and comforts which their own destitute and comfortless homes deny." In the Bolton of the twentieth century, though there is still individual squalor and personal misery to be found, the population—six times as numerous as in 1842—may, taken as a whole, safely be described as prosperous, healthy, intellectually alert, taking plenty of holidays, and almost aggressive in its independent self-reliance. So great a change, to be paralleled in many an industrial city of western Europe, demands an explanation.

To some observers of the first half of the nineteenth century—to John Dalton (1766-1844) or Sir Humphry Davy (1778-1829), for instance, or to Michael Faraday (1791-1867) or Sir Charles Lyell

(1797-1875)—it may have seemed, as is still sometimes asserted, that it was to physical or biological science, “far more than to the work of statesmen or to the creation of constitutions, or to the elaboration of social systems or to the study of sociology” that we had to look as “the great ameliorator of the human lot in life.” Unfortunately for this view, we must recognise that physical science had already achieved great marvels, and that some of the principal mechanical inventions which transformed English industry and enormously increased the wealth of its wealthy classes were already more than half a century old, when Bolton, and industrial England generally, lay, in 1842, in the lowest trough of its misery. If to ameliorate the human lot in life had been any part of the purpose of the great mechanical inventions, or of the far-reaching discoveries of physical science of the preceding half-century, they must be accounted to have egregiously failed. Since then, we have had to admit, as John Stuart Mill indicated already in 1848, that all the discoveries of physical science and all the mechanical inventions in the world, have not lightened, and by themselves never will lighten, the toil of the wage-earning class. A scientific discovery or a mechanical invention, though it may revolutionise the processes of industry and vastly augment our total productive power, does not in itself affect the terms of the bargain which the employer of labour is able to make with the wage-earner; does not make the profitableness of the “marginal man” to the employer any greater than before; and, accordingly, does not by itself make the working day shorter or the wages greater.

What mechanical, physical, chemical, and biological science has done to enlarge the range of our knowledge and augment our power over the forces of nature will be described in a subsequent chapter. But it is demonstrated by a whole century of experience that, while every advance in our knowledge of the universe increases the potential capacity of those who control affairs, this mere increase of knowledge, as a matter of fact, does nothing in itself to prevent or to diminish the poverty and social wretchedness of those in the rear. These are, indeed, in the procession of civilisation, left all the further behind. The social result of any increased power over nature enjoyed by the community as a whole depends on the use to which the community as a whole chooses to put it. But the ordered sequences of physical and biological phenomena which usually claim the name of science do not exhaust its scope. Of man in society, with all his various groupings and arrangements, as forming part of the universe, we may also increase our knowledge, and thereby increase our power to control phenomena outside the realm of physical or biological science, which are potent in the amelioration of the human lot in life. In short, there may be progress in political science, as well as in the sciences dealing with the non-human part of the universe. What has transformed the Bolton cotton-spinners of 1842 into the Bolton cotton-spinners of the twentieth century—what falls

therefore to be described in this chapter—is no mechanical, physical, chemical, or biological discovery, but a certain subtle revolution in the ideas of men; a certain advance in our acquaintance with those social laws which, to use Montesquieu's pregnant phrase, "are the necessary relations derived from the nature of things"; and, therewith, a certain increase of power to influence social phenomena. This power to influence social phenomena has taken shape in specific social movements associated with such appellations as municipal action and cooperation, factory legislation and trade unionism, sanitation and education, the Poor Law and the collective provision for the orphans, the sick, and the aged, and all that vaguely defined social force commonly designated socialism. These social movements, while the chemists and physicists have been at work in their laboratories, have resulted in the development of new social tissue; have been, in short, gradually transforming human society itself.

The revolution of the last three-quarters of the nineteenth century in men's ideas about social arrangements, and the consequent changes in social tissue which those ideas have been causing, may be described in many different ways. We may first notice, partly as cause and partly as effect, a certain shifting of the very basis of the local organisation of the community. In the manor, in all the varieties of the manorial borough, in the gild, and in the unreformed municipal corporation, men had for centuries unconsciously grouped themselves on the basis of their occupations as producers. Whatever else these social groupings may have been, on the economic side the manor was, at the outset, a group of agricultural tenants, the gild a group of craftsmen or traders, even the borough corporation a group of burghage occupiers whose economic interests were similar. These groups of tenants, craftsmen, or burghers—at no time coextensive with the whole of the local residents—had, by their very nature, a tendency to exclusiveness, and inevitably became small oligarchies in the midst of an unprivileged population, losing whatever sense they may once have had of fulfilling the communal needs, and expressing only their own members' separate and exclusive interests. Thus it was, throughout western Europe, the organisation of local administration on this old basis, which was essentially that of associations of producers, that long stood in the way of social reform. We see in England the slow beginnings of a different grouping in the gradual rise during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries of the parish vestries and the various bodies of road or harbour or town Improvement Commissioners, the latter as yet unnoticed by historians, which began to provide for the needs, and to act in the name, not of this or that exclusive group, but of all the local residents. And, as all the local residents necessarily used or enjoyed the benefits of the roads, the harbours, the lighted pavements, the cleansed streets, the improved thoroughfares, and the organisations for the protection of life and

property, which these new local governing bodies, by the opening of the nineteenth century, were beginning to develop, we may properly regard them as associations of consumers.

This was the real import of the revolution effected in England and Wales by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835. It substituted, in the structure of English local government, for the associations which, in their economic aspect, had originated as associations of producers, with their exclusive interests and tendencies, an organisation of the residents of each locality, for the purpose of satisfying their common needs. The Act was incomplete, and in many ways imperfect. It took three-quarters of a century for the principles then adopted to be carried into every part of English local government. The municipal history of the nineteenth century, all-important as it has been to the life of the nation, has found, as yet, no historian. Of the steps in the structural development we need only mention, so far as England is concerned, the gradual absorption, between 1840 and 1870, of nearly all the old bodies of Town Improvement Commissioners, and the concentration in the Town Council of practically all the functions of municipal government; the admission, between 1835 and the present day, of a hundred-and-fifty new and growing towns to full municipal privileges; the gradual democratisation, between 1867 and 1885, of the municipal councils by various changes in franchise and qualification (including the removal of all property qualification, and the acceptance, as electors, of the dwellers in single rooms and of independent women occupiers); the extension to growing urban communities, from 1848 onwards, under the Public Health Acts, of what were practically municipal powers of self-government under other names; the organisation, in 1888, of the local government of the whole metropolitan area and of the rural districts on what was virtually the same municipal basis; and the establishment, in 1894, of Parish Councils in the villages.

In 1870, as the result of changes made while the Education Bill of that year was under consideration by the House of Commons, there was a temporary reversion to the eighteenth century type of local organisation, separately elected School Boards being established independently of the general local governing body of the locality. In 1902 and 1903 these were all abolished, their duties being transferred to the general governing body of the Borough or County. Of the separately elected local governing bodies there remains, in 1910, only the Board of Guardians, which had been established under the Act of 1834 to administer the public provision for the relief of the poor; and, in 1909, a Royal Commission, appointed to overhaul the whole Poor Law administration, recommended the immediate abolition of this separate authority, and the transfer of its duties to the Borough and County Councils. With the exception of the management of some of the great rivers and ports, which does not logically come within the functions to be entrusted to the

ratepayers of a particular urban area, and for which accordingly there are often separately appointed trusts or commissions, the whole of England and Wales may be said to be now under democratic municipal government, on the lines advocated by Jeremy Bentham, adopted for the Boroughs by Lord Melbourne in 1835 and for London and the rural counties by the Ministry of Lord Salisbury in 1888. To the local Council of citizens, elected by ballot, annually or triennially, by the resident occupiers of house, office, or room, without qualification or restriction, is accorded a practically unlimited freedom, within the sphere allotted to it by law, to spend as it pleases, without any effective government control, the compulsory levies which, practically without legal limit, it is empowered, by mere majority vote, to make upon all the occupiers of land or houses within its area. It has taken more than a couple of generations for the local government of the rural districts, as well as that of the towns, to become (as Francis Place predicted in 1835) in this way "municipalised"; and (as may now be added) for this democratic organisation on the basis of the association of consumers for the supply of their own needs to be recognised as "Municipal Socialism."

Of the development of local government in western Europe and the United States—in its collective performance for the community of services formerly left to individual enterprise, essentially similar to that in the United Kingdom—space does not permit us to treat. The number and variety of services performed by the local governing bodies of France and Switzerland, Germany and Austria, Belgium and Denmark, Italy and Holland, like that of the local governments of New Zealand and the Argentine Republic, is often greater than in English or American municipalities. The municipal expenditure of New York and Paris exceeds even that of London.

However we may regard it, to this local collective activity, in its numerous and varied manifestations, is to be attributed a large share of the social transformation of all the cities of the civilised world, during the last three-quarters of the nineteenth century. We naturally see this transformation most clearly at what may be termed the nodal points of society, the urban centres where men are most thickly clustered together. The rapid development and multiplication of these nodal points is at once a cause and a result of the transformation. Throughout western Europe, the United States, Australasia, and South Africa (and, in fact, throughout the civilised world) the number and proportion of the dwellers in towns has increased, and is increasing, out of all proportion to the rural population; so that in many countries one-half, and in the most developed countries three-fourths, of all the inhabitants are now to be found in urban communities. In place of a world in which the towns were but exceptions in the common range of rural life, we have a world of towns, between which there are still to be found

interstices of country. These urban communities have left behind them, once for all, the ideal of a society of independent, self-sufficing households, each producing for its own needs. Instead, they take on the character, gradually, and at first without social self-consciousness, of cooperative communities, based upon the obligatory membership of municipal citizenship, in which one function after another is organised and fulfilled for the common benefit by the collective forces of the social group. Thus, we see throughout western Europe, and particularly in the England of the latter half of the nineteenth century, the municipal governments administering on a communal basis such services, once entirely a matter for individual self-provision by each household, as paving, lighting, and cleansing the streets; the prevention of assault, theft, and damage by flood or fire; the removal of faecal matter and garbage; the public supply and distribution on a large scale of the primary needs of existence, such as water, housing, milk, and now, in one place or another, even other food; the communal provision of artificial light, of certain forms of fuel, and of hydraulic or electric power; the provision of the means of transport and of intercommunication; the collective production, in public forests or on drainage farms, or in connexion with other municipal departments or institutions, of all sorts of agricultural products, and of this or that manufacture; the complete and minutely detailed care of the orphans, the sick, the blind, the deaf and dumb, the crippled, the mentally defective, the infirm and the aged; elaborate provision for the special needs connected with maternity, infancy, childhood, and the disposal of the dead; the provision of schools for children and of opportunities of instruction for adolescents and adults, as well as of libraries, museums, and art galleries; the organisation of apprenticeship, technical education, artistic production, and scientific research; the public organisation of the labour market; the prevention and treatment of destitution and distress caused by unemployment or misfortune; and the provision, for all classes and all ages, of music and other means of recreation, including the regulation of amusement and even its organisation. Among the tens of thousands of urban communities, in which more than half the population of western Europe and Australasia and an equally rapidly increasing proportion of the United States are now to be found, we see today an infinite variety in the extent, the manner, and the results of this collective organisation. What is universal and ubiquitous is a steady and continuous growth in the volume and the range of collective activity.

In the reorganisation of society which is thus everywhere proceeding, one important element in the consciousness of personal freedom, on the one hand, and in the efficiency of the social service, on the other, is the relation that exists between the local administrative bodies and the national Government. Here we may distinguish three main types. In France and Germany, the local administration, which is largely entrusted

to salaried officials of high professional qualifications, is, broadly speaking, closely supervised by and completely subordinate to the various departments of the executive Government of the State. The functions and powers of the local councils of elected representatives are narrowly limited: and their actual interferences with the local administration are, in almost all cases, subject to the control and approval of the central executive departments. In sharpest contrast stand the local governing bodies of the United States, which are, broadly speaking, wholly autonomous corporations, subject only to the State Legislature, to which the State executive departments are also subject, and which is itself limited in its powers by the State Constitution, to be changed only, after more or less elaborate precautions, by the electorate of the State as a whole. The result is that the administration of the local governing bodies of the United States is, broadly speaking, subject to no external supervision or control other than that of the ratepaying and voting electorates of their several localities.

In the United Kingdom, a middle course has been pursued. Prior to the Reform Act of 1832, there was virtually no connexion between the executive departments of the national Government and such local governing bodies as existed, which were accordingly, within the ample scope of the powers conferred on them by the law of the land, in practice as completely autonomous as those of the United States have remained. Nor did any supervision or control by the national Government enter into Lord Melbourne's plan of 1835. Gradually, however, it was perceived that it was essential that there should be, at any rate, some external audit of local government accounts; and that some external approval should be required before the local governing body was permitted, not merely to spend the rates paid by those who elected it, but also to embark on enterprises to be incurred out of loans mortgaging the future. Presently, it was realised that the government of a town was not merely a matter of interest to the inhabitants of that town, and that, whether in respect of roads and bridges, or in respect of infectious disease, whether in the health or in the education of its citizens, the nation as a whole had something at stake. The central executive departments had, moreover, at their command, a wider experience and a greater knowledge than any local body could possess. The difficulty was how to secure national inspection and audit, and national supervision and control, without offending the susceptibilities of local autonomy on the one hand, and without, on the other, losing the advantages of local initiative and freedom. The problem has been solved in the United Kingdom by the expedient of the grant in aid. The national Government, in the past three-quarters of a century, has successively "bought" the rights of inspection, audit, supervision, initiative, criticism, and control, in respect of one local service after another, and of one kind of local governing body after another, by the grant, in aid of the local finances,

and therefore of the local ratepayers, of annual subventions from the national revenue. These subventions have often been demanded by local governing bodies, and sometimes ignorantly accorded by complacent Ministries, as mere "doles" in relief of local burdens. Their actual function is, in fact, seldom explicitly realised. The bulk of the various grants in aid are now given conditionally on particular services being conducted in general accord with regulations framed for the purpose, and designed to secure a certain prescribed minimum of efficiency. The executive department necessarily assumes the duty of supervision and inspection, in order to see that the conditions are complied with. Since the amount of the grant may be reduced in default of such compliance, the criticisms and suggestions of the executive department, accompanied as they may be by a warning, come with authoritative force. They are not, as they are in France and Germany, mandatory injunctions, leaving nothing to local initiative and local discretion. The local governing body may grumble and dispute the accuracy or the cogency of the inspector's criticisms, or the value of his suggestions. Gradually, however, in one way or another, these well-informed criticisms and suggestions are attended to, at the instance of the local governing body itself, and in its own way. By this process, and with the aid of government grants, such local services as police and education have, without loss of consciousness of local autonomy, gradually been levelled up to a high minimum of efficiency. The process with regard to public health and the local provision for the invalidated has only just begun.

In the relations in which, with regard to the several services that it renders, the municipal association of consumers stands to its individual members, we see a wide variety. Consumption or use of the services may be legally compulsory, or may be left optional. It may be effectively voluntary, or virtually obligatory. Sometimes, the services are supplied to the individual users or consumers on payment of the whole or part of the average cost, in proportion to the amount supplied, as with gas and electricity; sometimes, in return for payment at generalised rates per unit irrespective of cost, as with road or bridge or ferry tolls, or the postal and tramway services; sometimes, for payments which purport to be made for the service, but are actually computed on some basis of fiscal ability, irrespective of the amount of service enjoyed, as is usual with water supply. Most commonly, however, the services are furnished on a frankly communistic basis, that is to say gratuitously, or at a nominal charge, with or without restriction or limit of user, the cost being defrayed from the communal property of the inhabitants, or levied upon them, according to their presumed ability, by means of taxation. So rapid, so unselfconscious, and so ubiquitous has been this development of municipal services that no complete statistical or descriptive survey of it has yet been made; and there is, as yet, no scientific study of its fiscal processes, and especially none of its "special assessments," or charges on

the individual for special services rendered. All that can be predicated of western Europe as a whole is that the extent, the variety, and the success of these communal enterprises, is, decade by decade, rapidly increasing. In England, the total capital under communal administration of this sort now amounts to more than a thousand millions sterling (or over £22 per head of population of the whole country)—a total that probably exceeds the entire capital of the England of Elizabeth, of the England of Cromwell, and even of the England of Sir Robert Walpole. To estimate how much this development of municipal services has meant in the amelioration of the human lot in life, let anyone consider how potent, how continuous and, in the crowded city life, how all-pervading, is the efficacy, in preventing suffering, degradation, and demoralisation among the masses, of the schoolmaster and the policeman, of the public doctor and the hospital, of the care of the orphans and the aged, of the systems of drainage and water supply, of the provision of parks and libraries. It is these things—not the discovery of radium or of the origin of species or the latest advances in spectrum analysis—that stand between the great urban aggregations of the twentieth century and the brutality and misery of barbarism. The typical figure of the England of the Middle Ages was the lord of the manor; the dominant types of the England of a century ago were the improving landlord and the capitalist mill-owner; the most characteristic personages of the England of the twentieth century are the elected councillor, the elementary schoolmaster, the school-doctor, and the borough engineer.

We see an essentially similar development of associations of consumers in another direction, specially characteristic of the latter part of the nineteenth century, differing from municipal government in resting on the basis of voluntary membership. What is known as the cooperative movement, the beginnings of which are to be found in the eighteenth century, has assumed different forms in different countries and in different decades. At the outset, it often took the shape of associations of producers, little communities of agriculturists or craftsmen, seeking themselves to own and to direct the instruments of their joint industry, and to share its product among their own members. These early cooperative experiments in agriculture and manufactures, sometimes limited in their aims, sometimes passing into communistic settlements—though taken up with fervent belief and potent driving force by Robert Owen (1771–1858), and frequently repeated by different groups of enthusiasts for half a century—failed to secure a permanent footing, and were one by one abandoned. Without realising how great was the discovery that they had made, the twenty-eight weavers of Rochdale in 1844 formed their little cooperative society in a new way, on the basis of the association of consumers. It was in the desire to organise jointly the supply of their own needs and to combine for the more advantageous expenditure of their own incomes—

not in the aspiration, which was one of the common forms of the time, towards cooperation as producers—that “the Rochdale Pioneers” inaugurated, and within half a century created, what has been aptly described as a State within the State.

Obtaining the necessary capital by their members’ own savings, fed from the ever-growing profits of their enterprises, the Cooperators have spread from town to town throughout the United Kingdom, and advanced from success to success. Their two-and-three-quarter million members, mostly of the wage-earning class, and representing probably one-fifth of the whole population, are now aggregated in about 1500 separate societies, which are themselves united in several great federations. Among them they carry on every kind of business (except only the provision of alcoholic drinks), from agriculture and manufacture to transport and banking; they have their own arable, pasture, and fruit farms, and their own creameries, butter and bacon and biscuit works, cocoa and jam and sauce and pickle factories; their own flour-mills and bakeries; their own dressmaking and shirtmaking and tailoring workshops, and even a corset factory; their own cotton-mills and clothing factories; their own hide and skin and boot and shoe and brush and mat and soap and lard and candle and furniture works; their own tinplate works and metal ware and crockery factories; their own printing establishments and their own newspapers; their own tea estates in Ceylon; their own buyers in foreign countries and their own ships on the sea; their own thousands of distributive stores, their own arrangements for insurance, their own banks, and even their own common libraries. Today, in the United Kingdom, the amount of the trade thus done by the two-and-three-quarter millions of Cooperative families with their fifty-five millions sterling of capital—the aggregate amount of the commodities and services thus supplied by themselves to themselves by the agency of their little army of 50,000 salaried officials, of the work thus performed for the common benefit without the supposed indispensable incentive of individual profit-making, and yet without any of the impracticabilities of communism—exceeds one hundred and twenty millions sterling annually; or more than the aggregate receipts from all sources of the municipalities and county councils and the other local governing bodies put together.

The two movements of municipalisation and cooperation have, in fact, been in the United Kingdom the complements of each other, and have as yet scarcely overlapped. Both represent an application of democracy to the supply of the wants of the household. The universal and compulsory cooperation of the citizens, embodied in municipal government, has developed so far mainly in the provision, by the agency of a salaried municipal staff, of gratuitous or nearly gratuitous services, or of such fundamental common necessities as water, light, transport, and housing. The bringing under democratic control of the

manufacture and distribution of the thousand and one commodities of food, clothing, and furniture that each household also requires has been undertaken, in the main, by the Cooperative Society formed on a voluntary basis and acting through its own salaried staff of officials. Together, as the result of the growth of the latter half of the nineteenth century these two movements in the United Kingdom have brought under collective control the supply of commodities and services representing an annual expenditure of something like two hundred millions sterling, or approximately one-eighth of the whole personal expenditure of the United Kingdom.

So great a shifting of the control and management of the production and distribution of the commodities by which we live could not fail to produce far-reaching social changes; changes which are all the greater in that they have taken place largely in the range of the life of the manual workers, and are, indeed, as yet scarcely known or appreciated by the middle and upper classes.

While the cooperative movement has, since its new birth in 1844, had enthusiastic prophets from other social classes—prophets and propagandists like Frederick Denison Maurice (1805-72), Thomas Hughes (1822-96), and Vansittart Neale (1810-92)—it has been essentially a working class movement. Moreover, it has been a movement without great intellectual personalities, in which integrity, prudence, and a certain gift among the thousands of committee-men of patient unselfish service in humdrum duties have counted for more than genius, though the historian must record the lifelong propaganda of George Jacob Holyoake (1817-1906). It is, in fact, in its intellectual and moral influence upon its members and the education of character, even more than the financial savings that it effects and encourages, that the cooperative movement has wrought a beneficent revolution among tens of thousands of working class families in the mining and manufacturing centres, and has contributed so largely to the social transformation of Great Britain. Each of the fifteen hundred cooperative societies, administering its own tens of thousands of pounds' worth of capital, engaging in an innumerable variety of enterprises, manufacturing as well as distributive, and sharing in the wider life of the federated movement as a whole, is managed by little committees of almost exclusively working class representatives, democratically elected by all the members, and accounting for their action at quarterly public meetings where all the affairs of the society are discussed. The largest society, the federal organisation known as the Cooperative Wholesale Society, wielding six millions of capital, doing twenty-five million pounds a year of business, employing nearly 20,000 hands, in a hundred different trades, at a hundred-and-fifty separate establishments, in ten different counties, is all managed by a committee of thirty-two ex-workmen, elected annually by the two million members. To the half-century of training in public adminis-

tration and in the working of representative institutions, which the cooperative movement has provided in nearly all the English and Scottish mining and manufacturing centres, the British working class owes much of its political education. A similar educational effect is to be seen in Ireland, where the cooperative movement, established practically by the patient service of Sir Horace Plunkett, is scarcely twenty years old. Here, the prominent type is that of the cooperative creamery or butter factory, established by a group of peasant farmers or small holders for the better disposal of the milk of their cows. The cooperative creamery is managed by a committee of the contributing members, and the profits are shared among them in proportion to the quantity and quality of the milk supplied by each. Beginning with a common enterprise of this sort, the small holders of many localities have learnt to combine and to work together for other purposes in which they have a common interest.

The cooperative movement is often ignorantly described as having succeeded in distribution and failed in production. Yet, beginning first with distribution, the fifteen hundred cooperative societies in Great Britain have built up a large number of manufacturing enterprises of the most varied kind and not a few of agricultural character, especially in dairy products. Their creameries and their manufacturing enterprises enjoy a permanent and ever-growing success. Five of the largest flour-mills in England, producing annually food for two million persons, and the most extensive boot and shoe factory in the United Kingdom, turning out more than a million pairs a year, are both owned and managed by the federated two millions of cooperators. It is, however, true that another type of cooperative society, founded on the diametrically opposite principle of the association of producers, has always languished, and has never attained any great measure of success. Taken up by the Christian Socialists of 1848, the ideal of the "self-governing workshop," in which the wage system would be superseded by groups of craftsmen, themselves owning the capital with which they worked, and selling the common product for the common benefit, long continued to captivate successive generations of idealistic workmen and philanthropists. But innumerable experiments have demonstrated that this organisation, though it may live for a time, and even for a long time in particular industries, is not usually compatible with the discipline, the concentration of managerial capacity, and the accumulation of capital, required by modern competitive industry. Cooperative societies of this kind, generally confining themselves to industries of low capitalisation in proportion to the number employed, either fail altogether, or else depart from the "self-governing workshop" ideal—mostly coming, in fact, to consist, in large proportion, of investing members who are not workers, and who appoint a manager to direct wage-workers who are not members. The modern form in which the idea of the

association of producers now finds embodiment is that of profit-sharing, often termed industrial copartnership, or the concession by the owners of the capital of a bonus over and above wages, combined, if possible, with some representation of the manual workers in the council of partners or directors by which the business is directed. This, though in practice little more than a philanthropic modification of joint-stock capitalism, has in certain cases had a great result in stimulating saving among the best of the workmen, and in enabling them to join the class of small investors.

On the Continent of Europe, the cooperative movement took at first other forms. In Germany, the most prominent for a long time was that of the cooperative loan society, where the joint savings or the corporate borrowings of the members constituted a fund from which loans could be made to such of their own number as required capital, a system of mutual guarantee and neighbourly supervision enabling this credit to be given safely to individual borrowers without means. We need not here distinguish between the Schulze-Delitzsch banks, started about 1850 by Hermann Schulze, burgomaster of Delitzsch, specially adapted to urban circumstances, and spreading mainly in the towns; and the Raiffeisen banks, begun about the same time by Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen, burgomaster of a district near Neuwied, designed to meet the needs of agriculturists, and spreading chiefly in the country. The Schulze-Delitzsch banks, of which there have come to be over a thousand, with over half a million members, and loan transactions of a hundred and fifty million pounds sterling annually, are individually larger institutions than the majority of the Raiffeisen banks, of which there are now no fewer than 13,000 with a million and a half members, and loan transactions approaching two hundred million pounds sterling annually. In this form, cooperation, while bringing under collective control the banking services needed by its members, and, so to speak, "democratising" the moneylender, is so far from aiming at superseding individual profit-making enterprise, that it has come to the aid of the *petite industrie*, alike in manufacture and in agriculture. Among the small masters and jobbing handicraftsmen, by whom so much of German industry is still carried on, and especially among the peasant proprietors and small holders who contribute so large a proportion of its agriculture, this popular cooperation to supersede the individual banker or usurer—to perform collectively for the common good what would otherwise be done individually for private profit—has wrought marvels of prosperity.

In France, the most prominent part in the cooperative movement was long played by small cooperative societies engaged in manufacturing industry, in which many of the workers were members. But, with increasing international intercourse, all forms of cooperation are now to be found in all the countries of western Europe; the largest part being now played by the Cooperative Societies of the nature of associations of

consumers, who combine in order, by their own salaried agents, to provide for themselves collectively, whether in agriculture, manufacturing, banking, transport, or retail distribution, without the intervention of any profit-maker, what they and their households individually require.

Such a shifting as we have described of the very basis of social organisation from producers to consumers in the development of municipal government and the cooperative movement, could not fail, even though largely without consciousness of itself, to influence the politics and the legislation of the time. In the United Kingdom in particular, the whole movement for freedom of trade, whether it took the form of abolition of gild and apprenticeship restrictions, or removing the customs barriers between nations, obtained its popular support and its far-reaching influence largely from the claim of the consumer to free the products he needed or desired, from the bonds and fetters of custom or law or tax. The English manufacturer of the early part of the nineteenth century may have desired Free Trade as a means of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice; but Peel and Gladstone opened the ports because it was felt that the claims of the consumer could no longer be denied. Other countries followed the lead thus given by the United Kingdom. The last remnants of gild ordinance and customary regulations hampering free competition passed rapidly away, and "Cobden Treaties" and "most favoured nation clauses" seemed, by the end of the third quarter of the nineteenth century, destined at no distant date to remove all "artificial" obstacles, and to attain the "Early Victorian" economic ideal of that perfect freedom of competition in which the consumer finds all the economic processes of the world conducted in obsequious obedience to his taste or whim, at the lowest possible cost of production.

But it gradually appeared that, in this apotheosis of the consumer, there were certain adverse features. The "industrial revolution," as it is called, which took place in England in the eighteenth century and on the Continent of Europe and in the United States at various dates in the nineteenth century, had resulted in all forms of industry, whether mining or manufacturing, transport or retail distribution, and even the greater part of agriculture, being organised on a capitalist basis. Especially in manufacturing industry, and in the towns, the typical figure ceased to be that of the master craftsman, himself a manual worker, who, in his family group of journeymen and apprentice, owned his industrial plant and the commodity that he produced, and sold that commodity for his own profit. In his place, we have the capitalist *entrepreneur*, using his capital to hire large numbers of lifelong wage-earners, entirely divorced from any economic interest either in the plant with which they work or the product which the associated labour of the factory or mine turns out for the profit of the proprietor. The forge of the village blacksmith has been superseded by the iron foundry, employing scores or hundreds

of "hands." The latter part of the nineteenth century witnessed a continuous and almost ubiquitous tendency towards the consolidation of industrial enterprises into larger and larger aggregates, in the twentieth century sometimes amounting to as many as fifty thousand workmen in a single capitalist enterprise; though this tendency is far less marked in agriculture than in other forms of enterprise. The result has been, throughout the whole of the nineteenth century, that the proportion of the workers who owned the product of their labour, or who participated in the profit derived from its sale, has steadily diminished; while the proportion of recipients of a mere wage or salary has steadily increased. The opening of the twentieth century finds, except in the agricultural small holdings of certain countries, and in a few surviving handicrafts, nearly the whole manual-working class divorced from the soil and from the ownership of the capital with which it works; dependent (apart from its relatively small invested savings) exclusively on wages; and constituting, in all advanced industrial nations, from two-thirds to four-fifths of the entire population. The nations have become, not democracies of independent producers such as Rousseau and Jefferson and Franklin contemplated, but "democracies of hired men," whose economic interests are primarily not in the amount of their product, of which they enjoy no share, but in the conditions of employment that "freedom of competition" accords to them.

It is the growing popular appreciation of this fact, long unseen either by the economists or by the capitalist class, which has, in the main, produced the social movements of the past three-quarters of a century. It seemed of small advantage to the Lancashire coal-miner of 1842 that he might get his clothes cheaper by means of perfect freedom of competition, if this meant also that he found himself driven to work excessive hours under insanitary conditions, in mines where precautions against accidents were omitted because they were expensive to the employer, and for wages which the employer's superiority in economic strength inevitably reduced to the barest subsistence level. It was a poor consolation to the Bolton cotton-spinner of 1842 that he could buy more cheaply the coal used by his wretched household, when the cotton-mill (equipped with the latest mechanical inventions for diminishing human toil) was compelling him and his wife and his little children to labour for twelve or fifteen hours a day, under revolting sanitary conditions, amid dangerous machinery left unfenced for the sake of economy, and in an atmosphere deliberately made unhealthy by gas and steam, in order that there might be fewer threads broken in the yarn that he was making. When the results of unrestrained competition in the employment of labour were gradually, and very slowly, perceived by the philanthropists, and made known by Robert Owen (1771-1858) and Lord Shaftesbury (1801-85), the statesmen found that they had no answer. The Free Trade economists of the first half of the nineteenth century—

and indeed, all who, consciously or unconsciously, were basing human society upon the needs and desires of the consumers—had learnt only half their lesson. They had been so much taken up with the idea of removing barriers and obstacles to have failed to realise that they had also to get rid of those illegitimate profits, involving a drain on the national life. M'Culloch and Nassau Senior, Cobden and Bright, understood that the grant of money aid to a particular industry out of the rates and taxes enabled that industry to expand, and to secure more of the nation's brains and capital, and more of the world's trade than was economically advantageous. They even recognised that the use of unpaid slave labour constituted an illegitimate drain on the national resources quite as much. But they never comprehended that to set the employer free to make exactly what arrangements he chose for his work, and to conclude exactly what bargains he chose with his individual operatives, inevitably meant, because of his superiority in economic strength, the reduction of wages for mere "common labour" to the worth of the marginal man—to a point, in fact, which experience proved to be even below what was physiologically necessary for subsistence—the exaction of hours of daily labour far in excess of what was compatible with healthy existence; the harnessing to the mill of the pregnant woman, of the nursing mother, of the immature youth, even of the child; the subjection of them all, in the attempt to reduce expenses to a minimum, to brutalising and insanitary conditions, and even to incessant risk of accident, for lack of the necessary expensive precautions; and, actually, when it was found to facilitate the manufacture, to the deliberate use of deleterious substances and the deliberate vitiation of the atmosphere by artificial heat and moisture to the ruin of the operatives' health.

All this meant, by the using up of successive supplies of human labour, each in turn to be prematurely flung on the rubbish heap of charity and the Poor Law, a subsidy to particular industries, not less inimical to the objects of Free Trade than if it had been granted from the taxes. But because it came as a drain on the vitality of the nation as a whole, paid in the first instance by the manual workers themselves, whose blood was thus coined for drachmas, the economic nature of the arrangement was long unrecognised. Not until the latter part of the century was it perceived that, if the object of Free Trade was to promote such a distribution of capital, brains, and labour as would result in the greatest possible satisfaction of human needs, with the least expenditure of human efforts and sacrifices, the limitation of the autocracy of the employer—the enforcement with regard to the conditions of work of the will of the many instead of the will of the one—was not only a necessary extension of democracy, but also as indispensable a part of the Free Trade movement, considered as an assertion of the real interests of the consumer, as the tariff reforms of Cobden and Bright. "During that

period," wrote the Duke of Argyll (1823-1900), "two great discoveries have been made in the Science of Government; the one is the immense advantage of abolishing restrictions on trade; the other is the absolute necessity of imposing restrictions on labour....And so the Factory Acts, instead of being excused as exceptional, and pleaded for as justifiable only under extraordinary conditions, ought to be recognised as in truth the first legislative recognition of a great National Law, quite as important as Freedom of Trade, and...like this last...destined to claim for itself wider and wider application."

We see this revolt against sacrificing everything to cheapness, which unrestricted freedom of enterprise was supposed to produce, leading gradually to factory legislation. The first hesitating steps in the legislative regulation of the conditions of employment, beginning with the Factory Acts of 1802, 1819, 1825 and 1833, and the Mines Regulation Act of 1842, were taken merely empirically, with the object of remedying patent abuses, and of giving to specific classes of wage-earners, by the strong arm of the law, that protection against ill-usage which they had been unable to obtain for themselves. Step by step this legislative protection has been extended, from trade to trade, from one class of workers to another, and from one element in industrial life to another. The Mines Regulation Act of 1842 was followed by successive statutes, steadily increasing the extent and minuteness of the precautions required against accidents, of the provisions for safeguarding the workers against being cheated in their wages, of the regulation of the work of women and boys, of the limitation of the hours of labour even of adult men, and, generally, of the supervision of the methods of working. By the Merchant Shipping Acts a similar legislative protection was extended to the seamen, and all others employed on ships. By the Regulation of Railways Acts of 1889 and 1893, the Board of Trade was charged with the prevention of excessive hours of labour among railway servants, and was enabled to insist on a reduction in the hours in all cases in which this was deemed necessary. By successive Truck Acts, Factory and Workshop Acts, and Shop Hours Acts, practically all manufacturing industries and nearly all retail shops employing female or youthful assistants have similarly been brought under regulation and inspection. "We have today," as the biographer of Richard Cobden enthusiastically recounts, "a complete, minute, and voluminous code for the protection of labour; buildings must be kept pure of effluvia; dangerous machinery must be fenced, children and young persons must not clean it whilst in motion; their hours are not only limited but fixed; continuous employment must not exceed a given number of hours, varying with the trade, but prescribed by the law in given cases; a statutable number of holidays is imposed; the children must go to school, and the employer must every week have a certificate to that effect; if an accident happens, notice must be sent to the proper

authorities; special provisions are made for bake-houses, for lace-making, for collieries, and for a whole schedule of other specified callings; for the due enforcement and vigilant supervision of this immense host of minute prescriptions, there is an immense host of inspectors, certifying surgeons, and other authorities, whose business it is 'to speed and post o'er land and ocean' in restless guardianship of every kind of labour, from that of the woman who plaits straw at her cottage door, to the miner who descends into the bowels of the earth, and the seaman who conveys the fruits and materials of universal industry to and fro between the remotest parts of the globe."

From England, factory legislation spread successively to France, Switzerland, and Germany; to Austria and Italy; to all but the more backward southern States of the United States of America; to the principal British colonies and to India; and even to Holland and Belgium, which long remained behind the other industrial countries. Taking the subject as a whole, and regarding administration as well as legislation, the United Kingdom still keeps the lead. But in many details other nations have improved on the lessons they have learnt from England. Especially in such matters as the minimum age at which children may be employed in the factory, the provision for continuation of their school education, the prevention of street trading by children and young persons, the protection of the workers from deleterious substances, the regulation of the employment of women just before and after child-birth, and the securing of a living wage in the "sweated" trades, Switzerland or Bavaria, France or New Zealand, Massachusetts or Victoria, have here and there gone ahead of British legislation. A voluntary association, the International Union for Labour Legislation, with its seat at Basel, now seeks to systematise and render identical or equivalent the "Labour Codes" of the civilised world.

The general acceptance and wide extension of factory legislation is, however, of very recent date. During the first half of the nineteenth century any interference with individual bargaining between employer and workmen found, as a principle, no favour with the enlightened classes; and the workers, despairing of parliamentary help, sought to protect themselves by voluntary associations. It is, indeed, a feature of the typical nineteenth century development of the substitution of collective for individual control that voluntary association and government action have always gone on side by side, the one apparently always inspiring, facilitating, and procuring successive developments of the other. Just as the progress of the collective control of the conditions of life in the form of municipal government has been paralleled by the growth of collective control over the household supplies in the form of the cooperative movement, so the progress of legislative regulation of the conditions of labour in the factory and the mine has been paralleled by the advance of analogous regulation by means of Trade Unionism,

Beginning, apparently, at the end of the seventeenth century, but not for over a hundred years making any great headway, the operatives in particular industries have combined in order to maintain their standard of life. Their instrument was, essentially, that eventually adopted by Parliament in the Factory Acts, namely, the substitution, for the terms that the individual employer was able to impose on the individual wage-earner, of common rules for the trade as a whole, embodying a minimum standard below which no employer and no operative was allowed to descend. Parliament began with common rules as to sanitation, protection against accidents, and the hours of labour of children. The Trade Unions began with common rules about rates of wages and methods of remuneration and the normal working day. Parliament enforced the common rules by official inspection and criminal prosecutions. The Trade Union developed only slowly a staff of salaried officials, and these had no right of entry to the employers' premises; and the only instrument on which it could rely to secure conformity with the common rules laid down for the trade was the strike.

We need not repeat the nineteenth century story of English Trade Unionism—how by the aid of Francis Place (1771-1854) and Joseph Hume (1777-1855) it was grudgingly legalised in 1824-5; how it got caught up in 1830-5 in one of the many phases of Owenism, and nearly became entangled, in 1842-8, in the political movement of Chartism; how it gained a new start, on more sober lines, in 1846-51, and developed on the more solid financial basis of an industrial insurance association; how these changes led to renewed parliamentary recognition of Trade Unionism in 1871 and 1875; how the movement, which had sunk into a somnolent acquiescence in industrial conditions, became reinvigorated in the last decade of the century, as the result of awakening "class consciousness" among the labourers; how, in 1903, in the "Taff Vale Railway case," the judges once more reversed the intention which Parliament had imperfectly expressed in its statute, and made the Trade Union (though denied the rights of a corporate body) liable for pecuniary damages as if it were a corporate body; how, in consequence of this decision, the Trade Unions swung their whole force into the rising "Labour party," and extorted from an unwilling Legislature, in 1906, a new Statute specifically conceding the inviolability of their corporate funds. Nor is it pertinent to recall the various pitched battles which, over the establishment of the common rules that we have described, the Trade Unions have fought with the employers, in the form of long and embittered strikes and lockouts, from which no decade has been free. It must suffice to record that, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Trade Unions of the United Kingdom number over two and a quarter million members, enjoy an annual revenue of more than three million pounds, and possess accumulated corporate funds exceeding six millions sterling. In many great industries—as it significantly happens,

exactly those in which British industry has been most successful in holding its own against foreign competition—such as cotton-spinning and weaving, ship-building, and coal-mining, practically every workman belongs to his Union.

Trade Unionism, like factory legislation, has spread to all industrial nations, adopting practically the same devices to secure its ends. Beginning, usually, with attempts at restricting the numbers of the trade, by limitation of apprentices or other barriers to entrance, as was natural with what, after all, was an association of producers, though of wage-earning producers only, and occasionally vainly seeking to adopt such typical employers' devices as restricting output and regulating prices, the organised workmen are seen everywhere settling down, as they acquire experience of the practical economics of the labour question, into the one device of the common rule, overriding where necessary all individual bargaining. Just as factory legislation, on the points with which it deals, lays down common rules in the form of prescribed minima, below which no employer and no workman is permitted to descend, so the Trade Union of workmen seeks, in treaty with the associated employers, to enact for the trade similar common rules, prescribing minima on other matters. These common rules everywhere include a standard minimum rate of remuneration, whether by time or (as an actual majority of Trade Unionists desire) more commonly by the piece; usually, also a normal day, or standard minimum of leisure; and, in the most advanced trades, also standard conditions relating to the sanitation, the safety, and the comfort of the workers. All such common rules the Trade Union seeks to get accepted by the employers, either by the method of collective bargaining, where the workmen as a whole, after more or less of discussion, make a treaty with the employers as a whole; or, to the extent that the legislature is under popular control, by statutory enactment.

Thus, in the most advanced industrial communities, Trade Unionism and factory legislation share the field between them. The common rules of the one supplement and support the common rules of the other. The cotton mill-owner and the cotton operative—in 1842, in practice almost free to do as they individually chose—find themselves at the beginning of the twentieth century moving in “the higher freedom of collective life.” The management of the industry is recognised to be of common concern. No mill-owner and no operative may do “what he likes with his own.” The associated employers, the associated workmen, and the community as a whole represented by the factory inspector, are bound together by elaborate codes, partly statutory, and partly the outcome of voluntary treaties, regulating wages, hours, holidays, meal-times, temperature, humidity, sanitary conveniences, the use of machinery, the speed of its working, the character of the material, the duration of engagements, and nearly every detail of the factory life. These codes, which are enforced not by the Government factory inspectors

alone, but also by salaried officials of the Employers' Association and salaried officials of the Trade Union, who enjoy in practice the same right of entry as the factory inspector, impose *minima* only, not *maxima*, and thus leave freely open to individual emulation and competitive enterprise of masters or of workmen the utmost opportunity on the upward way, but rigorously bar, to employer and operative alike, as inevitably leading to a degradation of the standard of life of the whole class, any attempt to pursue the downward way.

Towards the latter part of the nineteenth century, the historian has to record a further development. Men have gradually become aware, dimly and imperfectly, that there is a more fundamental basis for both factory legislation and Trade Unionism than the mere protection of the weak against the personal power which the command of capital gives to the employer. What is now seen to be essential is that, whether the workman be weak or strong in his bargaining power, wise or foolish in his demands, the community must see to it that those conditions which are requisite for social well-being shall not be infringed. This is now accepted, not only as a matter of emulation among nations, but, according to the lessons which Political Economy has learnt from biology and from Darwinism, as a fundamental necessity of national existence. "Every society," said Mr Asquith, "is judged, and survives, according to the material and moral minima which it prescribes to its members." Hence has come the conception of what has been called the "national minimum"; conditions of existence which, because they are deemed indispensable to social health, the State insists on importing into every bargain for the hire of labour, if not also into every act of a man's life.

There is a national minimum of sanitation, including protection against avoidable accidents and preventable diseases. Three-quarters of a century of endeavour, beginning with Robert Owen in 1819 and Sir Edwin Chadwick (1800-90) and Southwood Smith (1788-1861) from 1835 onward, gave us, first the general Public Health Act of 1848, and then the successive extensions of public health activity, by which the death-rate at all ages has been so much diminished. We now insist by law, not only that no factory, but also that no dwelling-house, shall be permitted to fall below the minimum prescribed for health. A new meaning and a new universality is given to the requirement that there shall be proper ventilation and heating of all workshops; that machinery shall be fenced; and that the vitiation of the atmosphere of the mill by "steaming" shall be kept within limits. It is this conception of a national minimum of sanitation which inspires and justifies the statutory provisions which now demand that proper water supply, sanitary conveniences, and drainage, shall be everywhere provided; that houses shall be properly built; that suburbs shall be properly planned and laid out; that constantly increasing precautions shall be taken against infectious diseases; and that, when accidents do happen, or when, in the course of

the industry, certain specific diseases are contracted, the medical treatment and maintenance of the injured workman shall be provided for by public hospitals and by a public medical service, as well as by money compensation. All this is not merely the protection of the weak, because it applies equally to the strong, and is enforced even against the wish of those whom it is desired to benefit. It is an assertion of the right and duty of the community as a whole to prescribe in its own interest the minimum conditions of health for every one of its citizens.

There is a similar national minimum of education. For its own sake, the State now insists (though not yet in rural parts of Ireland) that every child from five to thirteen or fourteen shall receive what is deemed proper instruction, and provides (at an expense from public funds in the United Kingdom of £25,000,000 a year) an elaborate array of schools and universities of every kind. There is, though as yet only over a part of the industrial field, a national minimum of leisure, in the legislative prohibition of the employment of persons for more than a specified number of hours in the twenty-four. This enforcement of a national minimum of leisure, applied at first only to parish apprentices, then to children in textile factories, then to women, then to other industries, has now been extended to adult men, imperfectly in the great railway service and in certain dangerous processes, and (in 1908) generally to all coal-miners working underground. Finally, we have in the legislation of New Zealand and Australia—now also partially imitated in the United Kingdom and France—what amounts to a much more important national minimum of subsistence than was afforded in England by its Poor Law. In the “determinations” of the Wages Boards of Victoria, and in the “awards” of the compulsory Arbitration Tribunals of New Zealand and New South Wales, and by the Trade Boards of the United Kingdom (1909), we see the imposition on the employers in particular trades of legally enforced common rules as to the minimum rates of wages to be paid in those trades, strictly analogous to the common rules with regard to sanitation and the hours of labour already imposed by the factory legislation which has spread through the whole civilised world. The same conception of a national minimum has lent a new significance also to the intervention by the Government of the State in the duties which have been entrusted to local governing bodies. The opening of the nineteenth century saw each locality free, in practice, to administer its own local affairs in the way that its own inhabitants, or those who acted on their behalf, chose to prefer. The twentieth century finds us recognising that we are members one of another; and that, if any one district permits insanitary conditions to continue, or provides an inadequate police force, or lets its roads fall below the common standard, or starves its educational service, it is not only the local residents who suffer, but the nation as a whole. Hence, in the United Kingdom, the enforcement upon local governing bodies of the national minimum of

efficiency in one service after another is becoming even more insistent and peremptory. Among local authorities, as among individuals, the laggards are being increasingly screwed up. This, indeed, is to some extent the explanation of the persistent rise of local government expenditure, even in the most somnolent districts, and of the ever widening spheres of municipal activity. Thus it is that at the opening of the twentieth century the potent lever of the grant in aid is securing for itself a constantly increasing field of play in English internal administration, and is, in fact, if we consider the actual business of twentieth century government, already the central feature of the real as distinguished from the nominal Constitution of the United Kingdom.

There is, in this development, yet another factor to be mentioned. In addition to many of the services and commodities which the people use or consume being placed under collective control, by municipalisation or cooperation, while many of the conditions of their daily life are subjected to collective regulation, by factory legislation or Trade Unionism, they are found, at the opening of the twentieth century, enjoying elaborately organised collective provision for the special needs of those among them who are unable to provide for themselves. Here again, we have to record the parallel development of the two forms of collective organisation, the one universal and obligatory, the other partial and voluntary. England had had, from the latter part of the sixteenth century, a nationally prescribed public provision for the poor. In 1842, however, this was nothing but the relief of destitution—the bare keeping alive by doles of necessaries those who would otherwise have starved. The actual legal scope of the Poor Law has continued, down to the present day, essentially unaltered. But the second half of the nineteenth century saw the growth of new methods of provision for one class after another, until, by the end of the century, the operations of the Boards of Guardians had come to form only a fraction of what was being done out of the rates and taxes.

For the children, in particular, the local Education Authorities, from 1870 onwards, have provided more and more elaborate education; at first for weekly fees, but after 1890 gratuitously; at first in elementary subjects only, but after 1902 without restriction of subject or grade or limit of age; at first in the form of tuition only, but gradually also in the supply of books and instruments, by school journeys and excursions, and (from 1906 onwards) even medical inspection and medical treatment and school breakfasts and dinners wherever required. With regard to the sick, the local Health Authorities have, from 1848 onwards, been steadily increasing their organisation and their services; until the opening of the twentieth century sees in existence more than seven hundred municipal hospitals, in which treatment and maintenance is provided, irrespective of their personal means, for all who are suffering from any of a constantly growing number of diseases in which the com-

munity is specially concerned; and this maintenance and treatment is usually provided gratuitously. In the most highly organised cities, the salaried Medical Officer of Health has now his own extensive staff of assistant doctors, health visitors, and sanitary inspectors who, instead of waiting for requests, make it their business to "search out" disease, and in the public interest practically to press on the sufferers both the medical treatment and the hospital maintenance which they may require. A special staff often visits every house in which there is a birth; a municipal milk dispensary often supplies, either at an unremunerative price or quite gratuitously, the requisite milk for the infant, and keeps it under periodical observation. For the persons of unsound mind, or in any way mentally defective, the local Lunacy Authority provides elaborate asylums, irrespective of their means; built, equipped, and maintained on a scale far above that of even the prosperous wage-earning household. For the aged, following the example of New Zealand and Australia, and, in a sense, also that of Denmark, the Government has provided non-contributory superannuation allowances; and the local Pension Authority began in 1909 to disburse pensions from national funds to 700,000 persons over 70 years of age whose income did not exceed thirty-one pounds ten shillings a year. For the able-bodied men and women in distress from want of employment, local Distress Committees, acting under the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, provide assistance deemed more suited to their needs than that of the Poor Law.

Thus, with regard to each section of the pauper army which the Boards of Guardians in 1834 were established to relieve, there has since grown up a new public authority, making other provision deemed more suitable to its peculiar requirements. Meanwhile the administration of the Poor Law has itself been transformed. Instead of giving mere relief, the Boards of Guardians, under the influence of public opinion, have provided elaborate schools for the children, highly equipped hospitals for the sick, with all the services of modern surgery, convalescent homes, etc., and, here and there, even comfortable asylums for the respectable aged, apart from the evils of that general mixed Workhouse, which meets, in the twentieth century, with ever widening condemnation. The result is that, in place of the seven millions sterling that was being annually spent on the poor in 1832, when the well-known Royal Commission was appointed to restrict so terrible a drain on the nation's wealth, the total expenditure from rates and taxes in the first decade of the twentieth century, on the maintenance, education, and medical treatment of the poorer classes, reached, in the United Kingdom, nearly seventy millions sterling annually, of which less than one-third still retains any association with pauperism or the Poor Law.

Side by side with this steadily increasing collective provision for particular classes out of public funds, we see a parallel development of collective provision on voluntary lines. In 1842, when the wage-

earner fell ill, or when any of his household fell ill, there was usually no resource on which he could rely, except his individual savings, and the exiguous services contributed by the Poor Law of that period. Gradually and almost silently, there has grown up in the United Kingdom a marvellous network of voluntary Friendly Societies, organised and administered by their members, in which, in the first decade of the twentieth century, no fewer than six or seven millions of the wage-earning and lower middle classes are enrolled. These voluntary organisations, managed almost entirely by working men, or, at all events, by men who have been manual working wage-earners, have learnt, by the hard lessons of experience, how to provide for their members with safety and efficiency a weekly money payment during sickness, the requisite medical attendance, maintenance when necessary during convalescence, and the expenses of burial. These benefits have been gradually developed in such a way as to constitute a rough sort of provision against the premature invalidity of the insured workers. But in thus developing, these voluntary Friendly Societies, unaided by any subvention from public funds, seem to have reached the limit of their power. Their attempts to provide for their members either old age pensions or maintenance during unemployment have not achieved success. The weekly contributions required to provide for the benefits already undertaken appear to be as great as the mass of the wage-earners can be induced to afford—to be, in fact, beyond the means of the millions of the more lowly paid and the more irregularly employed labourers, among whom Friendly Society membership makes no headway. In certain highly organised trades (comprising only 7 per cent. of the adult wage-earners) the Trade Unions add insurance against unemployment to the other benefits. This insurance has, however, not been found possible by two-thirds of the Trade Unionists, and is unknown to the other five-sixths of the adult wage-earners who are outside the Trade Unions, the great majority being engaged in occupations to which Trade Unionism has not yet extended. For old age pensions there is nowhere any extensive collective provision by voluntary organisations. Hence it was that the State stepped in to do what voluntary agencies had failed to provide. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the Government of the German Empire built up an enormous scheme of insurance of the wage-earners against sickness, accident, premature invalidity, and superannuation, under which no less than thirty million pounds sterling are now annually distributed to more than three millions of beneficiaries. But in Germany there existed nothing equivalent to the network of voluntary Friendly Societies that cover the United Kingdom; and the government scheme had therefore necessarily to include provision for sickness as well as for old age. The funds have been provided partly by a universal and compulsory deduction from wages, partly by an obligatory contribution from all employers of labour, and partly by the State,

which itself controls, through a complicated hierarchy of voluntary committees, the elaborate organisation that so great an insurance fund involves. One great drawback of the scheme is that no provision is made for wives or widows who are not themselves wage-earners—a difficulty which no contributory scheme, based on deductions from wages, or on payments in connexion with wages, has yet surmounted.

The peculiar combination of government and voluntary administration, and of the workmen's contributions with state subventions, which the German Empire has created, is slowly being imitated, at the beginning of the twentieth century, in France and Switzerland, Belgium and Norway. In the United Kingdom, as in Australia and New Zealand, the existence of voluntary Friendly Societies on a large scale apparently prevents the Government from following this example. Moreover, in the United Kingdom at any rate, the extensive provision for the hospital treatment of sickness made both by the Public Health and by the Poor Law authorities, and the elaborate system of poor relief to persons incapacitated from going to work, already covers, though in different ways, part of what is done under the German pension scheme. Thus it is that, in the United Kingdom, as in New Zealand and Australia, the government pension scheme has, so far, dealt only with old age, and has proceeded on the lines of exacting no separately earmarked contribution from workmen or employers, but of freely awarding pensions out of the national exchequer to aged persons fulfilling the specified conditions. In one direction, however, the grant of public funds in aid of workmen's collective insurance has spread even more rapidly than government insurance schemes. The first ten years of the twentieth century saw developed, in several continental countries, a plan by which workmen were encouraged and enabled to undertake that collective provision for unemployment which the better paid among the English and American artisans had long made for themselves. Under what is called the Ghent system—instituted at Ghent in 1901, and within seven years adopted by all the other towns of Belgium; imitated in France (1905); at St Gall in Switzerland (1905); at Strassburg (1906); in Norway (1906); and in Denmark (1907)—a contribution from public funds is paid to Trade Unions and other societies giving "out of work pay" to their members when out of employment, amounting to a definite proportion of the sums actually so disbursed in the preceding year. Under this stimulus, there has been in these countries a great development of Trade Union insurance against unemployment. Pressure to join a Trade Union is in this way converted by the public authorities into pressure to insure against future distress from want of work.

Thus, in all directions and throughout the whole civilised world, we may distinguish, as the dominant characteristic of the social movements of the past three-quarters of a century, an ever growing elaboration of organised common action. What was formerly either left to the

individual household to provide, or left altogether unprovided, is now, to an ever increasing extent, provided for large numbers of households by some collective administration. This collective administration takes many forms, differing widely from country to country, from service to service, and from decade to decade. Some of it, as we have shown, is on a voluntary basis, and the cooperation is really optional. Much of it, on the other hand, is governmental in its nature, whether municipal or national; though the use of the service is often optional. The common rules may be voluntary in their origin, and yet virtually compulsory; they may, on the other hand, take the form of peremptory laws, which it is left open to particular localities or communities to adopt or not as they choose. With the rapidly growing preponderance and size of town populations, the cooperation tends, however, to become more and more obligatory. Without the common rules that the law lays down and without the services that the municipality supplies, the citizen of the twentieth century would usually find it impossible to live.

But it is not alone the nineteenth century need for collective organisation that has made this so prominent an element in all the social movements of the last seventy-five years. What we see in many directions is the deliberate substitution of collective action, where individual action was still perfectly practicable. Factory Acts and Mines Regulation Acts were not made because the capitalist employers found any difficulty in achieving their ends. A large part of the impulse to this collective organisation, whether in Trade Unionism, or cooperation, factory legislation, or municipal developments, has come from that desire for popular self-government which is the spirit of democracy. But it is democracy in a more extended sphere than that to which the old jurists were accustomed to restrict it. This extension is, however, only one of a long series. When the Commons of England had been granted the right to vote supplies, it must have seemed an unwarrantable extension that they should claim legislation also. When they passed from legislation to the exercise of control over the executive, the constitutional lawyers were aghast at their presumption. The attempt of Parliament to seize the command of the military forces of the nation was the signal for the outbreak of a Civil War. Its authority over foreign policy is only two centuries old. Every one of these developments of the collective authority of the nation over the conditions of its own life was denounced by great authorities as an illegitimate usurpation. Every one of them is still being resisted in countries in the less advanced stages of political development. In Russia the right to refuse supplies is not yet definitely conceded; in Prussia control over the executive is withheld, and throughout the German Empire the control of the army; while in Austria-Hungary, the legislature is still without the power to control the foreign policy of that composite empire. In the United Kingdom, we have been silently

extending the power of the people to regulate, by means of their elected representatives, the conditions under which they work and live. To the capitalist, as to the great mass of the middle and upper classes, this extension of collective action has often seemed an infringement of individual liberty. To the mass of the people it has seemed a positive increase in individual liberty, and a necessary application of democracy. Although the power that kept the worker in the unregulated factory for fourteen or fifteen hours, or that subjected him to insanitary conditions, was not the tyranny of king or priest or noble, the wage-earner felt that it was tyranny all the same, and he has sought to curb it, and to enlarge the individual liberty that he enjoyed, by the substitution of collective for individual control. It was not within the minds of Rousseau, Franklin, or Jefferson, or of the leaders of the French Revolution, that the personal power over men's lives, to which they objected when it was exercised from the throne or the castle or the altar, might also come to be exercised in the factory or the mine. But the industrial revolution, which these early democrats did not foresee, brought to the possessors of wealth a huge accession of personal power, which they naturally felt as an increase in personal freedom. To the wage-earner, however, it seemed loss of freedom; and when at last he learnt to use the device of the common rule, he saw his way to get back, by means of representative institutions, some of the power over his own life of which the industrial revolution had deprived his class. Thus it is the extension of representative self-government from the political to the industrial sphere, and from mere political to industrial and social relationships, which is the dominant feature of the opening of the twentieth century.

We are thus brought round, by our analysis of the different social movements of the past three-quarters of a century, to that which has latterly become the most clamorous of them all, namely socialism itself. For it is just the conscious and deliberate substitution, in industrial as well as in political matters, of the collective self-government of the community as a whole, organised on a democratic basis, for the individual control over other men's lives which the unrestrained private ownership of land and industrial capital inevitably involves, that constitutes the central idea of socialism. The socialist movement, now an intellectual and political force in every country of the civilised world, definitely asserts this as the intellectual master-key of nineteenth century history, and claims that the trend of the changes of the past hundred years, as of the contemporaneous changes in economic thought and political science, is in the direction of substituting for the personal power of the owners of land and industrial capital the collective decision of the nation as a whole. In accordance with the experience of the past, the socialist demands the application of representative democracy to all the industrial conditions of the worker's life. Whatever the historian

may think of the socialist movement—and no historian can pretend to be, on such a subject, without bias—he must, at least, admit its persistence, its force, and its ubiquity. It is possible to trace the parentage of the socialist idea, on the one hand to Rousseau, who was hardly conscious of its economic aspect, and on the other to Saint-Simon, who ignored its democratic features. Fichte put much the same idea into philosophy, and Robert Owen, confusedly, into his long-continued propaganda. But not until about 1832 does the name of socialism seem to have been used; and it was then applied most commonly to schemes of more or less communistic settlements, apart from the competitive world, such as those advocated by Robert Owen (1771–1858) and Abraham Combe (1785–1827), François-Marie-Charles Fourier (1772–1837) and Etienne Cabet (1788–1856); or else to schemes of state-aided production by associations of producers, such as Louis Blanc (1813–82) and Ferdinand Lassalle (1825–64) had in view in France and Germany, and such as the Christian Socialists of 1848 may have aspired to in England.

With the publication by Karl Marx (1818–83) in 1848 of the so-called “Communist Manifesto,” and its appeal to workers of all countries to unite, the modern movement of organised political socialism may be said to begin. From this time forward, socialism put aside the foundation of Utopias in the form of separate societies or colonies, apart from the competitive world, and definitely insisted on the reorganisation of the existing social and industrial order on the basis of democratic government. We cannot here describe the slowly developing political movement which has, since 1848, spread to all civilised countries; the foundation, in London (1864), of the International Society of Working Men, with its strange combination of Trade Unionists and revolutionaries; of its internal struggles with an “anarchist,” or ultra-individualist section under Michael Bakúnin (1814–76); or of its final disappearance, about 1873. Much more important in the story of the socialist movement is the retirement of Marx from other work in order to write his book on Capital, which was published in 1867, and which has furnished inspiration to the socialists of all countries. Not that this book, impressive in its argumentative and rhetorical power, describes any definite scheme of collectivism, which is rather assumed than advocated. But Marx read in the British Museum library the English blue-books, which had led up to the successive Factory Acts, and, on the horrors that they revealed, he constructed a dynamic description of the industrial revolution in England, which, put as the inevitable result of unrestrained private ownership of land and industrial capital, has reverberated round the world. We need not take seriously today the peculiar version of the law of value which Marx had learnt from David Ricardo on the one hand, and Thomas Hodgskin on the other; and which, as explaining the paradox of mere subsistence wages in the midst of ever

augmenting wealth-production, was used by Marx with such impressive effect. Formally, this theory of wages is incorrect; and it has gone overboard from the economic ship, along with the wages doctrines of M'Culloch and Ricardo themselves. But, substantially, Marx was, in his analysis of the wage system in modern industry, assuming it to be uncontrolled by Trade Unionism or factory legislation, as right as he was impressive; and it is this analysis, together with that of Friedrich Engels (1820-95), which has indirectly contributed to the widespread contemporary acceptance of Trade Unionism and factory legislation, and of the doctrines of the common rule and the national minimum that we have already described. In England, where the effective socialist movement dates only from 1881, it has been intellectually more influenced by that other derivative from Ricardo, the law of rent, with its corollary of the inevitable appropriation, by the owners of land, of the economic advantage of all but the worst land in use. This doctrine, handed on by John Stuart Mill (1806-73) who in his posthumous *Autobiography* classed himself "decidedly under the general designation of Socialist"—postulating as the necessary basis of the society of the future, "a common ownership in the raw material of the globe, and an equal participation of all in the benefits of combined labour"—was promulgated with great rhetorical power by Henry George (1839-97), who may be said to have thus unwittingly provided the motive force for the rise of an organised socialist party in the United Kingdom.

Translated into terms of practical legislation and administration, the socialist programme, in England as in all other countries, is more and more shaping itself into four several lines of social reform. We see, first, the progressive extension of collective ownership and administration, either national or local, of one form of industrial capital after another, typified by the ever widening government ownership of railways, canals, telegraphs, telephones, postal communications, forests, water power, town sites, and agricultural land; by the municipal ownership and administration of the supply of water, gas, and electricity, of tramways, ferries, and bridges, of sewage farms and water-catchment areas and agricultural settlements of one sort or another; by the provision of houses, baths and wash-houses, parks and open spaces, organised games and free concerts; and, in short, by all the infinite variety of developments which mark the thousands of urban communities of western Europe. We have next the progressive assertion of the paramount control of the community over such land and industrial capital as is still left in individual ownership, in the form of ever increasing regulations, embodied in Factory and Workshop Acts, Mines and Railways Regulation Acts, Merchant Shipping Acts, Truck Acts and Shop Hours Acts, and what not. These regulations—denounced in 1844 as "Jack Cade legislation," because they were held, in effect, to confiscate a portion of the value of the capitalist's

property—are now more and more consciously inspired by the idea of securing, at all hazards, a “national minimum” of education, sanitation, leisure, and subsistence to every citizen, whether he likes it or not. All these developments of collective action cost money; and this fact helps to make increasingly acceptable the third line of socialist progress, namely, that (as Jeremy Bentham long ago advised) the State should use its power of taxation in such a way as partially to redress the inequalities of income that private ownership of the means of production involves; and, in particular, that a steadily increasing proportion of the shares received, irrespective of personal participation in industry, as rent and interest, should be absorbed for the benefit of the national exchequer. Finally, we have the fourth line of the socialist advance, in the constant elaboration of the collective provision, for those unable to provide for themselves, of whatever may be regarded for the time being as the national minimum that the modern State undertakes to secure to every citizen. We need only mention the ever increasing collective expenditure on the infants and the children of school age, on the sick and infirm, on the blind, the deaf, and the crippled, on the mentally defective of all kinds, on the prematurely invalidated and the aged, on the widowed mothers of young children; and now even on the able-bodied man or woman unable, amid the complications and fluctuations of modern industry, to find wage-earning employment.

This fourfold path of collective administration of public services, collective regulation of private industry, collective taxation of unearned income, and collective provision for the dependent sections of the community—and not any excursion in Utopia or “cloud-cuckoo-land”—is the way in which the socialist really invites us to follow. Thus, much of what is claimed as the progress of socialism might be equally well described as a merely empirical development from the principles of Canning, Peel, Bentham, and Gladstone. In short, while it is common ground that much of the legislation of the past quarter of a century, and much of the economic and political writing of the time, in England as in other countries, has been greatly influenced in the directions that we have described, opinions will differ as to how far the world is likely to proceed along such lines; and also as to the extent to which the vociferous efforts of the organised and avowed socialists are a cause, or merely an effect, of the general movement of thought.

The change that has come over the civilised world in the various manifestations that we have described may be summed up in a phrase. What may be called an “atomic” view of human society has been replaced by a more “organic” conception. Three-quarters of a century ago the dominant social philosophy was that of *Laissez faire*. Though in England and some other countries arrangements were made to keep the starving from death, and to prevent actual brigandage and robbery by violence, what little collective action existed was undertaken grudgingly.

ingly, and by way only of exception. The community as a whole assumed no responsibility for the individual. The pressure upon his will produced by the free competitive struggle would, it was assumed, if only "let alone," result in the utmost possible development of human happiness and human faculty. The current ideal of the social order was that of a congeries of warring atoms, the free competition of which would, it was quite confidently assumed, unconsciously result in the best attainable social state. The unit, it was said, was the family group; by which was meant, in practice, the male head of the family, the wife and children being scarcely recognised by the law as human beings, with rights or interests independent of those of the dominant adult male. By the beginning of the twentieth century we find an altogether different conception of society. The unit is no longer the family group, but the individual human being, whether newly born infant, child, adolescent, adult woman, or male head of the household. And we no longer believe that "beneficent private war" necessarily secures public ends.

The first of these changes in thought, the substitution of the individual human being for the family group, as the unit of the State, has involved the legal protection of the child and the emancipation of the woman, both of them social movements of far-reaching significance which are still in progress. A century ago, in Europe and the United States, as in India and China, children were, in the eye of the law, at the almost unrestrained disposal of their parents, and wives of their husbands. Neither children nor wives could, without elaborate and costly special arrangements, own property, or dispose of their own persons, or invoke the protection of the criminal law as against the dominant male head of the family, for any tyranny, ill-treatment, or cruelty short of actual death, and scarcely even for that. Gradually there is being built up, in one country after another, a legal recognition of what we may call the right of the infant, the child, and the adolescent to maintenance and proper nurture; protection against neglect and cruelty; education; exemption from premature work in industry or agriculture; and even vocational training. It is, however, interesting to notice that this gradual building up of the "children's charter" has been accomplished not so much on the plea of humanity—for so strong was the reluctance to "break up the family" that England began to punish cruelty to animals before it punished the cruelty of parents to their children—as on the ground of the State's paramount interest in the lives and upbringing of its citizens. It has been, on the whole, the latter argument which has led to the successive Public Health and Factory Acts, the Mines and Shipping Acts, the Education Acts and the more recent provisions for feeding children found hungry at school and medically treating those in need—the whole series culminating in the Children Act of 1908, which attempts to secure to every child in the land, from the newly born infant to the adolescent, even against its own

father and mother, what may be termed a national minimum of proper upbringing. All the civilised nations of the world exhibit a similar evolution, in different degrees, and in their own way. As with factory legislation, so with the protection of children, some countries (notably some of the New England States and some of the Australasian colonies) have, in certain particulars, gone ahead of the United Kingdom. Others, such as Russia and Austria-Hungary, have as yet made few inroads on the paternal authority. All, however, may be said to have entered on the same course. "It is intolerable," old natives of India complain, "that the law Courts should treat women and children as if they were men."

The emancipation of women has, indeed, become already more general than the legal protection of children. This is entirely a movement of the nineteenth century. *The Vindication of the Rights of Women*, which Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-97) published in 1791, with its demand for equal rights and equal opportunities for all human beings, irrespective of sex, found no substantial support for half a century. The theoretical democrats of the French Revolution definitely excluded women, not only from the political franchise, but even from public meetings and political agitation. There were practically no opportunities for the education of girls beyond the most elementary stage. In the eye of the law the daughter was a household drudge, the wife a chattel. Even in the United States, in 1840, Harriet Martineau found only seven employments practically open to women, as alternatives to marrying for a living, namely, teaching, needlework, keeping boarders, working in cotton-mills, book-binding, typesetting, and household service. About the middle of the nineteenth century, various sporadic demands for greater freedom for women, in the United States and in Great Britain, arrested the attention of John Stuart Mill (1806-73), and led eventually to the publication of his *Subjection of Women*, a plea for complete equality of opportunity for both sexes. From this time onward, the movement went from success to success. Good schools for girls were founded in all the countries of western Europe, and in the United States. The University of Zurich led the way in 1867 in opening university education to women; and Paris followed shortly afterwards. The Universities of Sweden and Finland opened their lectures and their degrees to women in 1870; those of Denmark in 1875; and those of Italy in 1876. The University of London conceded degrees to women in 1878, and that of Dublin in 1879. The Universities of Norway followed in 1884; those of Spain and Roumania in 1888; those of Belgium and Greece in 1890, and those of Scotland in 1892. Meanwhile, as the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and those of the eastern part of the United States, failed to provide for women, women's colleges were started (Girton, 1872; Newnham, 1875; Somerville, 1879; Lady Margaret, 1879) in England, and both colleges and universities for women in the United States. In the more recent growth of state universities in western America, and of the

Universities of Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, Birmingham, Wales and Bristol, women are admitted on practically the same conditions as men.

With the opening of higher education to women, there came naturally a demand for the opening of the brain-working professions. Elizabeth Blackwell got a legal qualification to practise medicine in New York in 1849. Various American States and the Netherlands were admitting women to practise medicine by 1870; England followed in 1876; and has already between five and six hundred female doctors at work; Russia and Belgium in 1890. Here and there, especially in the United States, women are acting as ministers of religion and in some branches of the legal profession. The right of married women to their own property and their own earnings was recognised in Great Britain by the Married Women's Property Acts of 1870 and 1882; and the legal systems of most civilised countries are now arriving in their own ways at approximately the same position. What may, perhaps, be deemed the last phase of this progressive evolution of women into complete social equality with men is that of the civic franchise. Women householders had long voted in the vestries, which administered the civil affairs of the English parishes; and, when local boards of health and town improvement commissioners were established in 1847 and 1848, this franchise was continued to them. It was conceded for English town council elections in 1869; for school boards in 1870; for Scotch town councils in 1881; for county councils throughout the United Kingdom in 1888 and 1889. Between 1861 and 1904, analogous local franchises were conceded to women in twenty-six States of the United States. In four States women possess the full state franchise (Wyoming, 1869; Colorado, 1893; Utah, 1895; and Idaho, 1896). In Australia and New Zealand, women were, between 1867 and 1908, successively admitted to all franchises. In Sweden, Norway, and in Finland, full rights have now been conceded; in the latter country, indeed, nineteen women were, in 1907, elected to the Finnish Diet.

This substitution of the individual human being, whether man or woman, infant or adult, for the family group, as the unit of the social order, has far-reaching consequences. But the disintegration of what we may call the eighteenth century form of *patria potestas*, has gone along not with a more lax, but with a closer, integration of the State. The community as a whole recognises that it has corporate ends, which it must pursue by corporate organisation. Its interests, which are not necessarily those of any individual member of it, loom large before us. We see no guarantee that perfect freedom of competition among individuals will not result in what no one of the competitors is aiming at, or has even in view. We are more and more disposed to believe that the community, which does not, with the aid of the best science of the time, consciously promote its corporate interests, will probably find

those corporate interests adversely affected. We can, therefore, no longer afford to "let things alone." The universal maintenance of a definite minimum of civilised life—recognised to be in the interest of the community no less than in that of the individual—becomes the joint responsibility of an indissoluble partnership, in which the State and the individual citizens, men, women, and children, have each their several parts to play. This does not mean that charitable doles and public assistance should be made a substitute for what the individual can effectively procure by his own exertions. Reasonable socialists and reasonable individualists alike recognise that the real test of any proposed change is whether or not it will result, in fact, in stimulating and developing the aggregate of individual faculty and individual responsibility which alone make up the strength and force of the community. This is the potent argument alike for the emancipation of women and for the enforcement of the national minimum. The issue between the parties is, indeed, as regards each successive reform, simply one of fact. What is clear is that, when the community accepts a corporate responsibility, the fulfilment of this responsibility by the device of the universal provision of the necessary common service by the municipality or the State has at any rate the advantage of leaving unimpaired the salutary inequality between the thrifty and the unthrifty, though on a higher level than before. As a matter of fact, the thrifty parent does not find that the universal provision of elementary schooling, and the establishment of a "scholarship ladder" to the University, at all diminish the advantage over his wasteful and extravagant neighbour, with which his thrift and abstinence have endowed him. On the contrary, the more the State and the municipality provide gratuitously for all, the higher are the advantages that prudence and economy open up to the exceptionally provident man.

Not without bearing on this result of collective action is the fact that, as has already been described, in the United Kingdom of the past three-quarters of a century, an increase of governmental action has been invariably accompanied, at a slightly later date, by an increase also in voluntary cooperation in the same sphere. We have seen how the steady development of "municipal collectivism" since 1835 has been accompanied by the growth of the cooperative movement since 1844. The early Factory and Mines Acts of 1802-42 were followed by the great extension of common rules secured by Trade Unionism since 1843. The expansion of the Poor Law into an extensive hospital and domiciliary provision for the sick, the infirm, and the aged, has been at least paralleled by the growth of Friendly Societies. We see here no sign that governmental collective action is inimical to voluntary cooperation in supplement and support of what is done by the State and by the law. It is, moreover, an inevitable complement of the corporate responsibility and the indissoluble partnership, which are the intellectual basis of the twentieth century State and twentieth century citizenship, that new and enlarged obligations, unknown in a régime of

Laissez faire, are placed upon the individual citizen, and enforced upon him by the community. The Bolton cotton-spinner of 1842 had no need to keep his children in health, or his house healthy; his wife could with absolute impunity let the babies die; the parents could put their offspring to work at the earliest age; the whole household was free, in fact, to live practically as it chose, even if it infected and demoralised the neighbourhood. Now, the Bolton cotton-spinner lives in a whole atmosphere of new obligations—such as the obligation to keep his family in health, and to send every child between five and thirteen daily to school, properly washed and dressed, and at an appointed hour; and the obligation not to infect his environment, and to submit when required to hospital treatment. While it becomes more and more imperative, in the public interest, to enforce the fulfilment of personal and parental and marital responsibility on every adult, it becomes more and more clear that no such responsibilities can be effectively enforced without at the same time ensuring to every adult the opportunity of fulfilling them. To enforce the fulfilment of these obligations on the negligent and the recalcitrant, the modern State has other expedients than the punishments of the criminal law. What happens is that the collective action of the community, by a series of deliberate experiments on volition, “weights the alternatives” that present themselves to the mind of the ordinary man. He retains as much freedom of choice as before, if not more than before. But he finds it made more easy, by the universal provision of schools, to get his children educated, and more disagreeable to neglect them. By the provision of public baths and cleansing stations, he finds it made more easy for him to keep his family free from vermin, and more disagreeable to let them remain neglected and dirty. By the public provision of hospitals and medical attendance, it is made more easy for parents to keep their dependents in health, and more disagreeable to let them die. The public organisation of the labour market by means of labour exchanges makes it easier for the man out of work to find employment, and enables the State (as the socialists and Trade Unionists are at one with the rest of the world in demanding) to make it more disagreeable for the “work-shy.” In every direction, the individual finds himself, in the growing elaboration of organisation of the twentieth century State, face to face with personal obligations unknown to his grandfather, which the development of collective action both enables and virtually compels him to fulfil. The claim is made—in the spirit of the teaching of Thomas Henry Green (1836–82), whose influence on English political thought deserves this recognition—that this new atmosphere of personal obligation results, paradoxically enough, in an actual increase, taking the population as a whole, in the enlargement of individual faculty, and in the opportunity for individual development. In short, in the growing collectivism of the past seventy-five years, law has been the mother of freedom.

APPENDIX.

I. BIBLIOGRAPHY.

IN vol. XII of the *Cambridge Modern History* (pp. 957-966) will be found lists of the principal books on Local Government in the United Kingdom, in the United States, and on the European Continent respectively; on Factory Legislation, Trade Unionism, Friendly Societies, and Governmental Insurance in all countries; on Co-operation in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, and other countries respectively; and on the Emancipation of Women. A convenient, selected list of books, covering all branches of social progress, will be found in *What to Read on Social and Economic Subjects* (P. S. King and Son, 1910, price 1s.). The latest information, with supplementary lists of books on the several subjects, is contained in *The Labour Year Book* for 1916, published by the Labour Party, 1 Victoria Street, London (704 pp., 1s. paper, or 2s. 6d. cloth; postage 4d. extra). Additional references are given in the following notes. All the books still in print can be obtained from the Fabian Bookshop, 25 Tothill Street, Westminster, which will answer enquiries as to what works are obtainable on any subject.

II. NOTES.

Page 13. The extent and variety of governmental provision of services and commodities all over the world (including both central and local government), together with an analysis of its shortcomings and its potentialities, may be studied in the *Report on State and Municipal Enterprise* (32 pp., 1915), by the Fabian Research Department (published as a Supplement to *The New Statesman*, price 1s.). The statements in the text fall short of the facts as to the amount, variety, and ubiquitousness of this assumption by government of the function of producing and distributing commodities and services.

Pages 14-16. See *Grants in Aid*, by Sidney Webb (Longman, 1911, price 5s.); and *National and Local Finance*, by J. W. Grice, 1910.

Pages 17-22. The Co-operative movement grows with such continuous rapidity that any description of its magnitude and variety promptly becomes an understatement so "out of date" as to seem obsolete to the initiated. But practically no member of "the governing class"—probably no London banker or politician—realises the magnitude of the Movement. Indeed, the printer and proof-reader of this chapter simply could not believe that a society of working men carried on its business in ten different "countries," and persisted in substituting "counties" (as it stands in the text). The Fabian Research Department made the whole Movement the subject of two elaborate Reports in 1914, one analysing the extent of the success of the Association of Consumers in all parts of the world, the portions of the field which it had failed to cover, its shortcomings and defects, and its probable potentialities and limits; the other dealing similarly with the rival basis of Association of Producers (together with Profit-sharing),

which has an equally universal record of disappointment—omitting, however, the important section of Agriculture. (See *The Co-operative Movement*, price 1s.; and on *Co-operative Production and Profit Sharing*, price 2s. 6d., issued as Supplements to *The New Statesman*). As an indication of the rate of increase, it may be stated that the capital administered by the largest body, the Co-operative Wholesale Society, on 31st December, 1915, was £10,782,418. Its sales of goods during the year amounted to no less than £43,101,747; whilst the number of its employees was over 27,000—we may say, doubling itself each decade! The extraordinary record of this, the largest trading unit in the world, so far as household supplies are concerned, is now given in its “Jubilee Volume,” *The Story of the C.W.S.*, by Percy Redfern (Co-operative Wholesale Society, Manchester, 1913), which describes in detail its history from its foundation in 1863. This book, which with characteristic independence, the C.W.S. chose to publish itself, under a title enigmatical to the uninitiated, remains almost as unknown to economic students as to those who think themselves educated. It ought to be in every College library, indeed in every public library of any kind.

Pages 26-28. Full particulars as to the present position of Trade Unionism in the United Kingdom should be sought in *The Labour Year Book* for 1916 (already cited). Apart from *The History of Trade Unionism* (first published in 1894), and *Industrial Democracy* (first published in 1897), both by Sidney and Beatrice Webb (Longman, 7s. 6d. and 12s. net), the student may be referred to *The World of Labour*, by G. D. H. Cole (Bell, 1915, price 2s.); and *Trade Unionism*, by C. M. Lloyd (Black, 1915, price 2s. 6d.), as the most recent descriptions of the Movement.

The important part played by women in industry always tends to be insufficiently considered. To this day treatises on Political Economy continue to appear, in which women are either not mentioned at all, or mentioned only in a perfunctory way. Yet out of twenty million persons recorded as “gainfully employed” in the United Kingdom Census of 1911, nearly six millions were of the female sex; and the proportion has since steadily increased. The vast majority of English women are industrially employed at wages during some part of their lives. And women wage-earners present social and economic problems differing from those of men. These problems are scarcely less important in the United States, France, Germany, and Australia. For more adequate treatment of this part of the Labour Question, the student is referred to the section on “Women in Industry” (pp. 257-279) in *The Labour Year Book* for 1916; the valuable publications of the Women’s Industrial Council; *The War, Women and Unemployment* (price 2d.) and *Women Workers and their Dependants* (price 1s.)—both by the Fabian Women’s Group; and *Conflicting Ideals* (of women’s employment), by Miss B. L. Hutchins.

Page 31. The need for making collective provision for those who would otherwise be crushed in the competitive struggle, and the gradual discovery of how to make this provision both effective and morally harmless, are described in *The Prevention of Destitution*, by Sidney and Beatrice Webb (Longman, 1911, price 6s. net); and analysed in the remarkable book called *Misery and its Causes*, by E. T. Devine (New York).

Page 34. It is at this point that the chapter will be found, in 1916, most wanting. The writer could not, in 1909, foresee how quickly the “stream of tendencies” would hurry our statesmen along! In 1911 the National Insurance Act enormously increased the amount and extended the range of the collective provision

for the contingencies of working-class life. By an ingenious incorporation, within a Governmental scheme copied closely from the German model, of the whole network of autonomous Friendly Societies and Trade Unions, Mr. Lloyd George brought into compulsory insurance for sickness, maternity, and invalidity practically the whole body of people in wage-earning employment; and into compulsory insurance for unemployment all the workers in half a dozen great industries in which unemployment was most prevalent, comprising one-fifth of the whole. The fullest information as to the organisation and working of this great scheme, which involves the collective raising and spending of something like £25,000,000 a year—it must be said, an extremely critical analysis, revealing the shortcomings and defects of the scheme—is given in the Report of the Fabian Research Department, entitled *The Working of the Insurance Act* (32 pp., 1914, price 1s.; published as a Supplement to *The New Statesman*).

The whole provision for the human non-effectives that every society must, by the very nature of its being, always contain, has, in recent years, acquired a new name. *Social Insurance*, by I. M. Rubinow (Holt, New York, 1913)—perhaps the only book describing exactly what each country throughout the world is doing for each of the contingencies to which the wage-earner's life is exposed—affords an instructive survey of the range of a subject destined more and more to form the centre of domestic politics in every civilised country. *The Labour Year Book* for 1916 contains (in Part VIII, Social Insurance, pp. 642-688) a detailed accurate analysis of the provision made in the United Kingdom, with a description of what remains to be done, respectively, for Accidents, Maternity, Sickness, Tuberculosis, Invalidity, Unemployment, Old Age, Loss by Fire, and the financial consequences of Death. Even this comprehensive survey fails to include the needs of Infancy, Childhood, and Youth, for which also social provision is imperative.

The text deals insufficiently with the provision made by the wage-earners for Death. Apart from the Funeral Benefit of the Friendly Societies and Trade Unions, the principal form taken by this provision is what is termed Industrial Insurance. This has now become a colossal business, not only in the United Kingdom, where it began about 1854, but also in the United States, Australia, South Africa, Germany, and Scandinavia, whilst it is just beginning in India. In the United Kingdom eighteen million pounds a year are paid by the wage-earners for this "Death Benefit"—more than is paid in Germany or in this country for all the varied benefits of the State Social Insurance schemes. But two-fifths of this enormous sum is spent in collection and management, whilst seven out of every eight policies lapse without becoming claims. Though nearly eight million pounds are annually paid in claims, surrenders, and bonuses the "insurance money" rarely does more than pay the funeral expenses. The system is of little avail as provision for the survivors. (The only full analysis of this system of Industrial Insurance is that contained in the Report of the Fabian Research Department on the subject—32 pp., price 1s.—which was published in 1915 as a Supplement to *The New Statesman*.)

In many of the United States, and in Denmark, provision is now made for "Mothers' Pensions" from State funds, to enable widows with children to keep the home together. In Germany, pensions for orphans were added to the State Insurance system in 1913. State Pensions for widows will undoubtedly be adopted elsewhere.

Pages 36-39. Upon Socialism, the enquirer is referred to *Socialism: a Critical Analysis*, by O. D. Skelton (Constable, 1911, 6s. net), as a fair and able review by a

non-Socialist. For the spirit of the Movement in this country, consult *Fabian Essays in Socialism* (1s.), and the other publications of the Fabian Society (see advt. at end of this book); and the full bibliographical list in *What to Read on Social and Economic Subjects* (P. S. King and Son, 1910, 1s.).

Page 42. The Emancipation of Women progresses at a rate that makes the statements in the text seem old-fashioned. Women's Suffrage, which started in Wyoming in 1869, but spread no further for nearly a quarter of a century, was adopted by New Zealand and South Australia in 1893, by Utah in 1895, by Idaho in 1896, and by West Australia in 1899. New South Wales followed suit in 1902, Tasmania in 1903, Queensland in 1905, Finland in 1907, Norway (partially) in 1908, Victoria in 1909, Washington in 1910, and California in 1911. In 1912 these were followed by Kansas and Arizona; in 1913 by Illinois and Alaska—also by Norway making its suffrage complete; in 1914 by Montana and Nevada; and in 1915 by Denmark, Iceland, and Manitoba. Twenty-five years ago women voted only in Wyoming. Now they vote, as a matter of course, in thirteen American, one Canadian, seven Australasian, and four European States. By 1919, when the Wyoming women will celebrate their Suffrage Jubilee, by how many will not this roll of States have been increased?

In several of these States, alike in Europe, Australia, and America, women have been made eligible also for election to the Legislature; and women have been elected, and have sat, not only in Finland, as stated in the text, but also in Norway and in Utah, among other places.

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